



Module 2: Collection Development

In this module, you will review the community your library serves and for which you develop the depository collection, your library's collection of Federal depository and supporting resources, and the policy or policies (or practices if you do not have a written policy) that your library uses to build a collection of U.S. Government publications in all media.

How your library chooses to address the questions within this module is a local determination. There may be several different, but perfectly acceptable, answers to the same question. Guidance for evaluating your own responses is highlighted within various sections and also at the end of the module. The questions address situations at many libraries; however, there may be additional or unique collection development situations at your library that you are encouraged to consider in your overall review of the topics covered in the module.

When considering the community your library serves, please consider that most depositories are designated to serve a particular U.S. Congressional District. Yet, the number of depositories currently in a District, the types of libraries in the area, and also the existence of established resource sharing arrangements may dictate a local public service area other than the U.S. Congressional District in which the library is currently located. These local service areas, if different from the Congressional District, should be negotiated among neighboring depositories to ensure all areas of the District are served.

Please keep in mind that providing no-fee public access to U.S. Government information is the guiding principle under which public officials designate depository libraries; therefore, the U.S. Government information needs of the general public must influence the collection development of depository libraries. The depository collection should provide resources that meet the U.S. Government information needs of both your primary and general public, or non-primary, users. The scope of the collection should have sufficient depth to accommodate reference and research services for your library's primary users but also broad enough to meet the general needs of all library users in the community.

Before you start this module, you are encouraged to review the resource lists and gather and review your library's collection development resources.



[Self-Study Module 2: Collection Development](#)

Working with the Module Part in PDF

For technical information on how to work with the PDF portion of the module, please consult the information found in the [Introduction](#) to the Self-Study.

GPO Resources and Tools

Before you start, you are encouraged to be familiar with the following resources.

- * [Amendment of Item Selections](#)
- * [Building Collections:](#)
 - * [Basic Collection](#)
 - * [Suggested Core Collections By Library Type](#)
 - * [Passworded Databases](#)
 - * [Essential Titles for Public Use in Paper or Other Tangible Format](#)



[Catalog of U.S. Government Publications](#) (CGP)

[Core Documents of U.S. Democracy](#)

FDL* Handbook: [Appendix D: Sample Selective Housing Agreement](#)

[FDLP Community](#)

[FDLP Electronic Collection](#)

[FDLP Internet Use Policy Guidelines](#)

[GPO Access](#)

[Guidelines for Depository Libraries: Substituting Online for Tangible Versions of](#)

[Depository Publications by Selectives](#)

[Item Lister](#)

[List of Classes of United States Government Publications Available for Selection by](#)

[Depository Libraries](#)

[Needs and Offers](#)

[New Electronic Titles](#) (NET)

[PURL Referral Report](#)

[U.S. Government Bookstore](#)

Library Resources to Gather and Review

- * Collection Development Policy
- * State Plan, if any
- * Selective Housing Site Agreement or Shared Housing Agreement(s), if any
- * List of or information about secondary sources that support use of the depository collection, e.g., databases or reference books

Other Resources Referenced in this Module

- * [Documents Data Miner 2](#) (DDM2)
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FDLP Electronic Collection

The FDLP Electronic Collection is comprised of:

- * Core legislative and regulatory publications which reside on GPO servers, available through GPOAccess;
- * Products directly managed for other agencies on GPO servers, or through formal agreements with other institutions, and available through GPO Access and FDsys;
- * Publications identified, described, and linked to through GPO services, but which remain under the control of originating agencies, with access through GPO's locator tools and services;
- * Tangible electronic products (such as CD-ROM, DVD, or others) distributed to Federal depository libraries.

Providing access to the FDLP Electronic Collection is an FDLP requirement. "All depository libraries must offer the general public free access to online Federal Government information provided through the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP)." Furthermore, "All depository libraries are expected to provide access to the products in the FDLP Electronic Collection." (FDLP Internet Use Policy Guidelines).



While not all depositories select all tangible resources, all Federal depository libraries can access online resources and are expected to provide access to them. There are many ways to accomplish this, but one easy way to do this is to provide access to the resources described in the Catalog of U.S. Government Publications and those publications in GPO Access and FDsys directly from your library catalog and/or Web pages.

FDLP Collection Lists

GPO frequently gets questions about the difference between the FDLP Basic Collection, Essential Titles, and Suggested Core Collections lists. Some frequently used publications appear on more than one list.

For more information about these collection lists, please consult the FDLP Desktop articles under [Building Collections](#).

Collection Development Policies

Collection development policies are important to each Federal depository library for defining the user community and for documenting the selection of publications most pertinent to the needs of their users.

A majority of libraries that are designated depositories have, as their primary mission, a commitment to serve a particular patron group (e.g., students, judges, etc.). While these libraries focus collection development most closely on the needs of the library's primary patrons, the libraries must not ignore the U.S. Government information needs of the general public, or non-primary users.

Even large depositories, such as regional depositories, benefit from having a collection development policy. With a thorough community analysis, including a review of formats preferred by the different library users, libraries may more effectively target staff training and promotion efforts to maximize use of the depository collection.

The following are suggested components of a collection development policy that supports a depository operation:

- * Library mission statement
- * Community analysis of the U.S. Congressional District or local areas served to help identify the U.S. Government information needs of the community
- * Strategies for meeting the Federal Government information needs of the library users
- * Depository selection responsibility
- * Subject areas, including intensity levels and subject strengths
- * Collection arrangement
- * Formats selected and format selection decisions
- * Selection tools, non-depository items, retrospective resources, including selection responsibility
- * Management of maps/GIS resources/cartographic resources
- * Management of electronic resources
- * Resource sharing (e.g., ILL, use of a shared catalog)
- * Responsibilities according to a State Plan
- * Collection evaluation



- * Collection maintenance, including weeding
- * Access to resources (e.g., cataloging sources, indexes available, etc.)

Here is additional information about some of the suggested components listed above:

A **community analysis** of the U.S. Congressional District and local area served helps you identify the Federal government information needs of your library's users. The analysis is very useful for determining what subjects, formats, languages, special products, and age-appropriate materials to select and make available.

Strategies to meet the information needs of library users include activities such as:

- * Use of current awareness tools and/or resources.
- * Tangible and electronic collection use analysis.
- * Solicitation of patron feedback about or requests for the depository collection and services.
- * Cooperative activities with non-depository libraries to ensure appropriate referrals and cooperation.

There are several methods available to guide selectors in creating a **balanced collection** that matches user needs' with existing information products. One such method is to create a chart that lists the following:

- * Subject areas
- * Federal agencies that support these areas
- * Existing collection level in each subject
- * Desired collection level in each subject
- * Types of publications collected.

Collection intensity or strength levels may be defined using the following examples from two different sources:

Research Library Group's (RLG) Collection Intensity Levels:

- 0 - out of scope, not collected
- 1 - minimal
- 2 - basic information
- 3 - instructional support
- 4 - research
- 5 - comprehensive)

Library of Congress' Collection Strength Levels:

- * Minimal
- * Reference
- * Research
- * Comprehensive

Format considerations your library may consider include:

- * Frequency of use or usage patterns
- * Library user group format preferences
- * Space/storage capacity and frequency of publication
- * Cost of providing access (including hardware or other machinery as well as staff time to identify, learn to use, train, and assist patrons)
- * Availability of a particular format (including its completeness and permanence)



Authoritativeness of content in particular formats

- * Resource sharing capabilities
- * Library's prior holdings